Reinventing Continuing Higher Education

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INTRODUCTION

The world is changing in ways and at rates of speed that most are unable to fathom. Leaders of some of the most innovative higher-education institutions in America are scrambling to keep up with changes in the global economic environment and America's position within it. All of these developments cannot help but make traditional continuing educators question our role moving forward.

Traditional colleges and universities are embracing much of what continuing higher education has traditionally done, and in some cases not only embracing but also rapidly integrating it into their core mission. Certainly, continuing professional education has become broadly recognized across America, and most institutions are embracing mature and part-time students, particularly at the postbaccalaureate level. And new technologies are being engaged to serve regional, national, and international markets.

What is the appropriate and enduring value of what we have come to know as continuing higher education? The short answer is that if we continue to do what most of us already are doing, we are bound for obsolescence sooner rather than later. But if we can recognize the diversifying knowledge needs that are emerging in this era of rapid technology gains and disruptive shifts in global markets, we have not only a continuing role but also an opportunity for leadership. However, to provide leadership, we will need to embrace new concepts, employ new tools, and form partnerships more appropriate for 21st century economies and societies. In other words, we will need to reinvent continuing education.

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THE RAPIDLY CHANGING CONTEXT FOR CONTINUING HIGHER EDUCATION

There are obvious growing needs for education and for credentialing across America. However, the nature of such needs and the forms of knowledge required are not sufficiently discussed. National media have been much quicker to identify the disconnect between curricula available through America's colleges and universities and the skills and competencies needed not only by employers but for global citizenship as well. Ninety-five percent of the customers in the world today are outside the US. The highest economic performers in the world are not in Europe or America any more, but in places like Brazil, China, and India.

The importance of innovation to the country's health, well-being, and economy is not clearly understood. It drives not only productivity but also economic growth and job creation. Innovation works in complex ways. It is a critical 21st century issue. Innovation for large companies often takes the form of technologies and strategies that can replace old processes and contribute to downsizing the workforce. Innovation in manufacturing and services can enhance the competitiveness of small manufacturers and traditional service providers globally by introducing new machinery and new skills that can compete with global competitors such as the Chinese or Germans, keeping good jobs at home. Innovation also is inventions and breakthroughs that create new products that are often the foundation of whole new industries. Breakthrough innovations and advanced manufacturing technologies actually create local jobs of great value.

The paradox is that even though innovation has become the watchword of America's universities, 90 percent of the patents in America still come from manufacturing and supplier companies, not universities and research labs. Universities are good at breakthrough innovation, but the economy needs the other kinds of innovation as well. Thus, how we define the role of universities needs to be re-imagined in the 21st century. Countries such as Germany, China, and Brazil are ahead of us in new technology arenas such as clean and renewable energy. The United States can no longer assume that on all fronts it is the source of innovation on which others build.

Our national context is also changing. In spite of rampant globalization, only 21 percent of Americans citizens have passports. The United States, while still a first-class economy, increasingly is developing a third-class infrastructure. Transportation, communications, and water, for example, are infrastructure needs we are not addressing at a time when the rest

of the world is taking great leaps forward. The US economy is also continuously changing: Fifty per cent of the Fortune 500 companies change every 25 years, and these new companies need educated and/or "ready to work" employees. Of the 47 million new jobs we expect to create over the next decade, a third will require at least a bachelor's degree and an additional 30 percent will require a community-college degree or formal skills certification. The other data point worth repeating is the declining performance of United States students on standardized tests in math and science. Today, US students score lower than 40 other nations in math and science, and reading competency is also on a rapid decline. When we look at the percentage of the population with college degrees, the United States is first in 60-year-olds and older who are college graduates, but seventeenth in the under-30 category.

The character of economic growth in the US is also changing rapidly: Export of goods fuels 46 percent percent of economic growth today by and export of services, another 14 percent. Being an effective export nation requires a global perspective, global production standards, and globally competitive workers. The prospect of losing to retirement nearly 78 million baby boomers with substantial education and experience means that the economy needs to replace their knowledge and experience while ensuring more advanced technical knowhow and global competencies among all workers.

Finally, many serious academics argue that the world economy is entering yet another age of city-states. Certainly, this is the case in the geographically vast, diverse American economy. A hundred metro regions produce almost 90 percent of the nation's GDP. However, each does so in distinct ways. Some metro regions are centers of finance, others are trade and transportation hubs, many are manufacturing and production centers, still others are rich in education and professional services, and a half-dozen are extraordinary hubs of R&D and breakthrough innovations. In sum, we live today in a world where, as Bruce Katz of the Brookings Institution has said, "we must innovate locally, advocate nationally, and network globally."

The kinds of skills and the knowledge needed to function in a world like this are multidimensional and complex. The old days of arguing whether one needs a liberal-arts education, an applied degree, or a training program are over. Today's economy requires both intellectual knowledge and the skills to put this knowledge to work. In many ways the debate is misplaced. If ever the economy needed liberal-arts graduates, it is today.

However, critics are once again calling for universities to focus more on job skills. Now is not the time to dilute the curriculum. If you don't understand history, religion, cultural differences, or foreign languages, you will be ill equipped to work in global occupations as diverse as electronics, retail, or tourism. Additionally, employers need workers who can navigate today's ocean of data by identifying and interpreting what is useful and pertinent. These are the kinds of skills and competencies a good liberal-arts education provides. To navigate the workplace challenges of today requires learning fundamentals, not just techniques.

While many adults have been slow to change in today's global market, it is notable that young adults have figured out faster than the university or faculty that they need both knowledge and skills to be successful. In record numbers, college grads are enrolling in extension certificate programs typically taught by a practitioner with workplace experience. Unlike the 1950s through 1970s, when schools of continuing education and extension services were more like second-chance universities for adults who didn't have the opportunity to get a college degree, these units are hubs of education and training for college grads. They provide the practice-oriented credentials that, combined with a solid liberal-arts degree, make for globally competitive careers. Universities should be strengthening their liberal-arts curriculum, not diluting it with skills courses, to improve the global competencies and critical-thinking skills of American graduates. In turn, graduates must improve their practical skills by making a commitment to lifelong education. In many fields a college degree is merely a necessary, while not a sufficient credential for lifelong employability.

Part of the reason that we still have high unemployment is that job seekers do not understand what the new economy requires, and continuing higher education is not doing enough to help them. The array of job growth opportunities is dazzling. They include repurposing the nation's skilled and technical workers for new applications. Examples include welders, pipe fitters, and mechanics. About 500,000 welders are currently working in the United States. Welders are retiring twice as fast as replacements are being trained. Geriatric health care is another example. The baby boomers are getting older, some 34 million Americans are 65 years or older, and that population will double by 2030. Eight of 10 seniors have at least one chronic health condition. The demand for certain healthcare jobs and services—nursing, personal care, and home health care—will increase. Today's 4 billion mobile-phone users outnumber both Internet users and landline owners.

Cell phones and other mobile devices are now multifunctional devices that enable users to surf the Web, listen to music, download podcasts, use maps, access global positioning satellites, shoot and send photos and videos, and send text messages. The number of ways to use smart phones is exploding. English translation and foreign languages are growth fields. In the next 40 years the number of Spanish speakers in the United States is expected to rise from 31 million to more than 100 million. Growth for this job field is projected to increase by 22 percent in the coming decade. Renewable energy and the greening of all jobs are the new reality. By the mid-21st century all jobs will be green jobs. Organizations today must address potential regulatory changes and look for growth opportunities in the new era of sustainable environmental economics. The number of green jobs in the United States grew 9.1 percent between 1998 and 2007, about two and a half times faster than job growth in the economy as a whole, according to a study by the Pew Charitable Trusts.

University labs and R&D companies across the nation and around the world are developing innovations in science and technology that shape all these new industries and career sectors. Every job within these sectors requires different levels of basic education or training as well as a commitment to continuing education because of the never-ending transformations in technologies and applications. However, there is a growing gap between what the work force knows and can do and what employers at all levels need. We must synchronize training with innovation to get ahead of the curve. These shifting skill and knowledge needs are non-trivial in a shrinking world where economic growth abroad and new technologies enable employers to find the talent they need anywhere. American universities and continuing higher education providers need to do a better job of building—actually re-building—America's talent pool.

WHERE DOES CONTINUING HIGHER EDUCATION FIT IN AN AGE OF GLOBAL INTERDEPENDENCE?

The context for learning has changed radically in the 21st century. Will colleges and universities, much less continuing education programs, be ready to help citizens address those challenges? Continuing higher education has focused primarily on providing adults with access to many of the traditional learning experiences of the university using flexible formats, i.e., evenings and weekends. It has been animated by a commitment to access and equity primarily through conventional credentials—bachelor's

and master's degrees—on a part-time basis. A whole cottage industry has grown up around adult and continuous education with pedagogies appropriate to adult learners. Given the changing context, isn't it time to shift our focus from the certification needs of the learner to the knowledge needs of society? Learners live and work in society, and technological and global forces beyond the control of any individual or community are shaping that society. Is it possible we are missing the opportunity to serve many learning needs because we are only thinking about individual learners rather than the broader context?

What this raises is a larger question about the role and value of knowledge in society: Is it simply an individual resource to be delivered to individuals who, in turn, will develop it for broader social purposes? Or, in advanced economies, is knowledge a primary resource that shapes organizations and communities, as well as whole economies? In my book, *Knowledge Without Boundaries* (1995), I made the case that knowledge has become the foundation block not only of the economy, but also of workforce and professional competencies and citizenship. Knowledge is embedded in the rapid changes in science and technology that affect the building blocks of everyday products, processes, and production. Knowledge is core to problem solving and to the advanced computational, language, and interpretive skills needed in the workplace. Knowledge is essential to navigating the vexing issues we face as citizens: global warming, diminishing natural resources, cultural and social diversity, and their effects on neighborhoods, schools, and health care.

Knowledge is not just a resource for an individual to acquire for certifying competency. It is ubiquitous, affecting all aspects of human, social, and political behavior. If we accept that it is knowledge that drives economic growth and the solutions to civic challenges, what kind of knowledge is needed? For what purposes, at what times, and in what places? How do communities build robust regional knowledge hubs to enable individuals, organizations, and local communities to innovate locally, advocate nationally, and network globally in the manner urged by Bruce Katz? I think the reinvention of continuing higher education is linked inextricably to how we respond to these challenges.

THE IMPERATIVE TO INNOVATE LOCALLY

For 25 years economists have made a convincing case for the importance of what Michael Porter in 1985 described as "globally traded" industries for

all national and regional economies. Regions typically need about one-third of their economy to be globally traded if they are to prosper. This means that external investment and the exports of goods and services are core activities in selected sectors. Globally-traded sectors allow for significant infusions of external resources into a local community, i.e., computer chip and automobile sales, legal and marketing services, tourism. In turn, this enables the other two-thirds of the local community to build economic activity around more regionally-based industries, i.e., housing, health care, restaurants, retail trade. In order to have globally-traded sectors, a region needs industries and services that are continuously innovating to keep pace with global technological and market trends. Innovation happens on many fronts: It can be breakthrough innovation of the type that creates whole new products like the iPod; it can be incremental, creating whole new production processes, such as computer-aided design and manufacturing; and it can also be social and administrative, in terms of linking new technologies—high-speed computing—in order to automate large quantities of data, e.g., hospital and patient health files. In order to benefit from any of these forms of innovation, communities need adaptive, nimble entrepreneurial capabilities so that they can recognize changes in technology and markets and adapt their skills and practices. That means all communities need adaptable, increasingly competent workers and professionals in order to build, operate, and innovate in their key industries and institutions. We need to teach and coach people to be nimble and ready for uncertain futures and unplanned-for opportunities.

What this means for continuing education is that we need to approach how we identify learning needs and deliver knowledge services in new ways. At a minimum, we need to be an active partner in regional efforts to elucidate regional futures, economic horizons, talent needs, and the knowledge gaps that inevitably arise from shifts on these fronts. Research, timely publications, and civic forums may be some of the tools we need to consider more actively. In addition to understanding what is happening, we need to contribute to the growth of the economy through regionally-appropriate initiatives such as helping to identify, shape, and incubate promising new companies and clusters by providing facilities, education, technical assistance and mentoring; building global marketing and communication skills among previously regional suppliers and service providers; and creating citizen-education initiatives that focus on trends and forces reshaping individual and community horizons.

Beyond these community-building contributions, continuing educators have a vital role to play in identifying and filling regional talent gaps in competency areas appropriate to their institutions. Community colleges provide a different set of services for a different component of the regional economy than do liberal-arts colleges or comprehensive research universities. Each has a role to play in helping fill regional talent gaps. Tapan Monroe, Henry DeVries, and I wrote *Closing America's Job Gap* (2011), in which we noted the enormous demand in the American labor market for highly skilled workers who can be retrained to work in new and emerging enterprises. Examples are pipe fitters for fields such as biofuels and welders for advanced materials such as the composites that go into propellers for windmill farms and nuclear power facilities.

In addition to retraining and repurposing the skills of blue-collar workers and tradespeople, there is a tremendous push for currently certified professionals such as doctors, teachers, nurses, and engineers to use new technologies and practices. The most dramatic example in the United States today is the Obama administration's support of health informatics not only for developing a transparent health-information system for patients, but also for streamlining healthcare delivery through medical monitoring devices, new diagnostics, and therapeutics that are more cost effective and generally accessible. Such developments cannot happen if senior-level management is not sophisticated about where technology is going, or accounting and finance leadership does not understand the long-term return on investment from changes in everyday practices. It most certainly cannot occur if the nurse, doctor, therapist, or technician delivering the care resists using the technology. The healthcare example ripples throughout the American economy today: the way we teach in public schools; the way we provide social services to increasingly diverse populations; the way we design and manage housing, neighborhoods, and transportation systems—technological shifts and new competitiveness realities affect them all.

No matter what reports one reads on where the jobs are created, the answer is clear: Innovation creates jobs, and entrepreneurs who start companies that feature innovations in products, materials, or processes are responsible for the most new jobs. More than 90 percent of the new jobs in America today come from small companies and startups, of which more than half have been in business for five years or less. Continuing higher education needs more effective strategies for delivering skills and education to both entrepreneurs and emerging industries.

It is too often the case that the curriculum of universities is shaped by the needs of existing and large employers who are perceived as stable and reliable customers. In fact those employers, particularly if they are globalizing, do not grow the regional workforce. Larger companies typically outsource work or build partnerships in other parts of the nation or the world. It is the small, nimble entrepreneurial companies that rely heavily on a regional workforce. We need methodologies for better understanding and integrating their needs into our curriculum. But this implies that each continuing education center, particularly on a research-university campus, needs to become a different kind of resource: not simply a place where adults can go for part-time certification and administrative mechanisms that make it easy for them to access traditional university curricula and degrees, but rather a center of workforce intelligence, jobs and career trends information, and counseling and advising. We need to prepare people for the next opportunity, help them think about building a knowledge and skills portfolio, and assist them across the lifespan as they move in and out of formal, informal, and degree-oriented education.

THE IMPERATIVE TO ADVOCATE NATIONALLY

An important trend today is branding: Regions across America are branding, or more accurately re-branding themselves to build on their globally-critical core capabilities and differentiate their value. They do this to attract external investment, international partners, the population that can enrich not only the economic, but also the overall quality of life of their "place." Branding occurs in subtle and not so subtle ways. For example, one thinks of Los Angeles as the entertainment capital of the world; London and New York as financial capitals; Pittsburgh, once the home of mainframe computers, as a global center of robotics. A region's brand attracts people sometimes as tourists, sometimes as investors, and sometimes as employees.

Given the imperative for local communities to advocate nationally not only for identity and customers, but also for federal policies and foundation strategies that take their needs into account, it is important for continuing educators to understand how policies at the state and national level affect the differing regional industries that make up our local economies. We have a role in helping with policy analysis and implementation, particularly in making the public understand important issues shaping regional futures. These include such topics as environmental regulations, free trade, H-1B visas, labor policy, and education. This does not necessarily mean that a

continuing education unit has to create a large and expensive department of public policy. It does mean, however, that deans of continuing higher education should find ways to understand regional issues through partnerships with local academic think tanks or policy analysts and use their infrastructure to deliver programs that inform the public in meaningful ways. It benefits the work of continuing education through the knowledge and insights it can provide. It also contributes enormously to creating alliances and partnerships that may pay off in other ways. And of course one of the more valuable services a continuing education unit can provide is regional and national meetings and conferences on topics that connect local industries with national peers in a manner that not only delivers good information but also creates good connections.

Universities and especially centers for continuing higher education also can play a powerful role in helping to describe the distinctive character of the regional labor force, assessing the distinctive skills and knowledge that are embedded in that work force as well as the gaps. Regions can thus be better equipped to recruit new employers and to communicate to federal agencies and national foundations their distinctive workforce assets and gaps. The challenge is not just cheaper labor from Taiwan and India; the skills of American workers are becoming increasingly less competitive with counterpart countries such as Germany and Sweden. We need to understand better the knowledge and skills needed in our regional labor pools, how those are changing over time and, in turn, we need to advocate for policies and investments that favor localized labor development, not just national systems of workforce development.

In sum, what all of this means is that continuing higher education can contribute to three distinct spheres of activity at the local level. Because of the conference planning, program delivery, curriculum development, and marketing capabilities most programs in continuing higher education possess, we are uniquely positioned to be a critical partner in regional branding or re-branding efforts. This is most certainly the case when it comes to showcasing the core industries and the distinctive knowledge and talent resident in the region. We at the University of California, San Diego (UCSD), for example, are engaging in half a dozen national forums that shine a light on our region. These are, of necessity, in partnership with organizations outside the region such as professional associations, and in one case, *The Atlantic Magazine*, co-sponsor of the Aspen Ideas Festival and the Washington Ideas Festival. Collaboratively, we have launched a

three-day seminar, "The Atlantic Meets the Pacific," where we introduce some of the most exciting new ideas developing in science, technology, and medicine to a national audience.

UCSD has also begun an annual seminar in Washington, DC for healthcare leaders in our region to introduce them to decision makers in Washington and to let leadership in Washington hear how our community is grappling with healthcare challenges. Topical local forums that draw national leaders into the region have also been enormously effective in helping to rebrand the region. In UCSD's case, endowed lectureships have brought leading economists, journalists, and political pundits into our community not just to give a speech for $25,000 and go back to their hotel; in addition to a university-anchored public lecture, speakers spend time with students, attend luncheons and roundtables with faculty and community leadership, and give interviews to local media, In that manner, we are able to build a deeper understanding between the external expert and the local community to seed opportunities for continuing interactions.

The advanced credentialing—in particular, certificate programs—we offer can be are invaluable to local employers as well as employees, especially those in the globally-traded sectors where national and international competencies prevail. Another UCSD example is apropos. In 2011–2012, UCSD Extension, serving a population of a little more than 2 million, had approximately 60,000 enrollees, of whom 86 percent had college degrees. Extension also had a high number of students with master's degrees (19 percent) and doctoral and medical degrees (6 percent) in these programs. Extension offers 100 distinct certificate and special-study programs, with 92 percent of the enrollees reporting high levels of satisfaction and 69 percent reporting an increase in their personal and professional network. These certificate programs do not replicate the campus curriculum, take significantly less time and cash than master's programs, and seem to be useful, given 50 percent annual increases in overall enrollments. Talent matters for innovation. Continuing higher education must contribute to building a world-class regional talent pool.

THE IMPERATIVE TO NETWORK GLOBALLY

Throughout this essay, I have underscored the extent to which globalization is a fundamental reality for all American companies, even mom-and-pop operations in small towns. Partners, suppliers, markets, and distribution sources are increasingly global. Local shops often include products that

have been invented, designed, and manufactured in dozens of different places before they arrive on their shelve. For companies that utilize global components in their products or seek global markets for their products—whether apple butter from Brown County in Indiana, 3D movies from Los Angeles, or world-class golfing equipment from San Diego—local leaders, managers, and everyday workers need to have a better understanding of the culture, social dynamics, and regulatory issues shaping the use or sale of their products anywhere.

Additionally, because of global migration, linguistic and cultural competencies are essential. They are also important to local retail establishments, healthcare providers, K-12 educators, and financial-services and high-tech firms serving or staffed by people with often very different religious, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds. Universities and continuing higher education need to address the needs of managers, teachers, and a wide array of professionals such as nurses, attorneys, doctors, and judges, all of whom are required to understand the distinctive values that diverse populations bring to their experience of work and civil society.

Businesses and key organizations within geographic regions also need global linkages not only to deploy and develop new products, but also to help companies that have existing products link to partners and consumers around the globe. Local companies throughout America need help in the ABCs of going global. As we try to grow the export-based component of our economy, it is crucial that providers of continuing higher education be strategic partners with the local companies and service providers who are attempting to find global markets. Through language instruction, history, sociology, management education, and insight into regulatory affairs we can be a strategic resource to them. That means we must not only provide education in the science, technology, and medical research that is shaping our global position in the world. We must also be the sources of knowledge, competency, and ultimately empathy for world cultures and global politics.

What these ideas mean for continuing higher education is quite clear: We need to be certain that the content of our entire curriculum informs the global knowledge needs of the individuals, organizations, and communities we serve. Language and cultural content must be a part of all we do. International marketing, international management, and international sales can no longer be separate parts of the curriculum that are simply added on; they need to be embedded in the core programs that we offer. We need to engage in programs that link our adult students and community stakeholders to

campus global resources. Through lectures, forums, and conferences, we can create the kind of knowledge hubs and networking opportunities for global connections that are needed by our students in many of the companies and organizations for whom they work. Finally—and here continuing higher education tends to be in the vanguard—we need to use technologies creatively to link and leverage our regional assets, education, and economy on a global level. Online learning, webinars, global videoconferencing are all tools that enable us to help our communities build global competencies and relationships.

CONCLUSIONS

New realities require a different ways of thinking and acting. Trends and needs in the larger society—rather than the existing curriculum of departments or individual needs of learners—must shape the approach of continuing higher education. This is why postbaccalaureate certificate programs promise to be such an important and growing niche for continuing higher education. What these programs do is allow young college grads to transition to meaningful careers and help established professionals upgrade their skills and knowledge quickly. They can also help professionals leverage their experience, skills, and knowledge with an additional certificate that allows them to enter a new field of professional practice. Four- to eight-course sequences whose curriculum has been defined by a combination of traditional academics and practitioners, and where instructors with practice-based knowledge and good connections provide instruction, are becoming as important to adults across America as the first bachelor's degree, a master's degree, or other forms of advanced certification. In terms of all of the imperatives we are facing moving forward, we need to begin re-imagining the types of credentialing and certifications that are most meaningful in a knowledge economy and take a leadership role in developing them.

A second competency we need to elaborate is that of building partnerships and collaborations. These allow us to work with organizations that have competencies, access to markets, resident talent, or delivery capabilities that we do not possess. Our existing infrastructure and talent pool limit the knowledge issues we identify. Through partnerships and collaborations such as with a public-school district, a hospital-training organization, or a regional department of city planning, we can accomplish a great deal more.

More controversial perhaps is the need for us to recognize that continuing higher education is not something that state or county government alone

will fund. We have to learn to finance our activities drawing on multiple revenue streams, just like the universities of which we are a part. Tuition is the usual way people think about financing educational programs. However, at campuses such as UCSD, we have been able to significantly expand the range of programs we offer to the constituencies we serve through contributions, program underwriting, and contracts and grants. Leadership of continuing higher education institutions in the future needs to be adept at developing relationships that can provide multiple forms of revenue.

Practitioners in this field also need to become more competent in specific knowledge arenas while becoming better at networking and integrating ideas and information across multiple communities of value and expertise. Much innovation comes at the intersection of fields of practice, at the intersections of disciplines such as engineering and medicine, or music and mental health. We need professionals who are not simply adept at organizing and offering events but have the intellectual wherewithal and social skills to harvest valuable knowledge from many sources and re-integrate it into programs and certificates that serve the needs of practitioners. This in turn means people who are adept at identifying new competency areas and emerging skills because they are connected to both the knowledge creators—professors, researchers, and authors—and the knowledge users, i.e., professionals, managers, and technical experts. If our programs are going to bridge the world of ideas and the world of action, we need people in our departments who are equally at home in the world of ideas and practice.

Finally, we need multiple ways of packaging and delivering knowledge. The current mania for online learning is interesting to watch. All we are doing is creating traditional courses using non-traditional tools to deliver traditional information for mostly traditional jobs and credentialing. New technologies allow us to create subscriber groups who can link into lectures, workshops, and conferences. The new technology allows us to bundle and provide coaching and mentoring services to professionals in strategic areas of practice. Streamed video allows us to introduce our knowledge assets and experts in one- to ten-minute programs that can lead to additional lectures and then a course, and ultimately even a certificate or degree program. We need new thinking about how to utilize new media.

In sum, re-inventing continuing higher education is about finding ways to be a more central player in our region's civic, cultural, and economic life as well as in the education of individuals for work and citizenship. Continuing higher education will require data gathering, analytical tools,

convening authority, interpretive skills, new models of delivery, multiple modes of financing, and new performance metrics. The success of our national economy depends on higher education as a lifelong resource to individuals, organizations and communities as they navigate the incredible technological and global forces shaping regional economies and community life. We have to reinvent ourselves in order to contribute to the reinvention of our regions through:

- Increasing knowledge of place.
- Partnering in regional strategies to ensure or enhance regional prosperity.
- Identifying, building, and renewing the regional talent pool.
- Providing access to global ideas and resources essential to regional success.

The bottom line is that communities need more places where knowledge and practice connect. Can we, as professionals in continuing higher education, provide these places? Lynda Gratton, in *The Shift: The Future of Work Is Already Here* (2011), evocatively describes this need. She makes three powerful points: we live in an age where serial mastery is essential, which means continuous learning and further education need to be part of every citizens life; social capital is increasingly important, and working people need an environment where they can "hang out" with the "big ideas "crowd;" people have multiple careers and interact on a daily basis with multiple, local, and global communities. Therefore, they need a regenerative community in which they can participate and through which they can find meaningful relationships and collaborative opportunities. Universities are potentially valuable resources for all three and yet, the modern research university continues to aspire to be a place apart from society, a place where primarily full-time students needing face-to-face education with academically-anchored, full-time professors are welcome. We in continuing higher education can be the champions for our universities becoming the kind of hub Gratton advocates. If we do that we will have truly reinvented ourselves.

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